

Amendments to the Drawings:

The attached sheets of drawings include changes to FIG. 2 and FIG. 5. These sheets, which include FIG. 2 and FIG. 5 replace the original sheets including FIG. 2 and FIG. 5. In FIG. 2 reference numbers 120 have been changed to 112. In FIG. 5, reference numbers 214 have been changed to 216.

REMARKS

Drawing Objections

The drawings were objected to because of the use of certain reference numbers. The drawings have been amended to eliminate the objections.

Specification Objections

The specification was objected to because of certain informalities. The specification has been amended to eliminate the informalities.

The specification was also objected to as failing to provide a proper antecedent basis for the claimed subject matter of claims 20 and 46-50. Claims 20 and 46-50 have been amended to eliminate the objections.

Additionally, the specification has been amended to correct errors of a typographical or clerical nature. The specification has also been amended to add a Summary.

No new matter has been added.

Claim Objections

Claims 6 and 11-25 were objected to because of certain informalities. These claims have been amended to eliminate the informalities.

Claim Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. §112

Claims 14, 20, 28, 34, 44, 50, 54, 56, and 57 were objected to as indefinite. These claims have been amended to eliminate the indefiniteness rejection.

Claim Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. §§102 and 103

Claims 1, 2, 7, 12-14, 21, 23, 25, 26-32, 35-40, 42, 45-48, 51-55, and 58-62 were rejected as anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,496,032 (Okada). Claims 3-6 and 8-11 were rejected as obvious over Okada in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,470,079 (LeStrange et al.). Claims 15-19, 22, 24, 43, 44, 49, 50, 56, and 57 were rejected as obvious over Okada. Claim 20 was rejected as obvious over Okada in view of U.S. Publication No. US2004/0033832A1 (Solomon). Claims 33 and 34 were rejected as obvious over Okada in view of U.S. Publication No. US2003/0060280A1 (Oles et al.). Claim 41 was rejected as obvious over Okada in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,531,309 (Kloss et al.).

Claim Amendments To Eliminate The Prior Art Rejections

The independent claims have been amended to patentably distinguish over Okada, alone or in combination with other references.

The Primary Reference

Okada is directed to a management method for gaming halls having slot machines. A plurality of system control units (SCU) 10a-10p are connected to a main control unit (MCU) 11 that acts as a management computer. A token dispenser is mounted at the side of each slot machine. Each SCU is connected to plural pairs of a slot machine and a token dispenser. For example, SCU 10a is connected to a pair of a slot machine 15a1 and a token dispenser 16a1, a pair of a slot machine 15a2 and a token dispenser 16a2, a pair of a slot machine 15a32 and a token dispenser 16a32. The SCU 10a is also connected to a token counter 17a and a money exchanger 18a. The token counter counts tokens to be exchanged for goods and money. (Col. 4, lines 21-43).

In operation, the amount of money received by each token dispenser 16a1 to 16p32 and the number of exchanged tokens are supplied to each corresponding SCU associated with the token dispensers. The number of tokens entered into each slot machine 15a1 to 15p32 and the number of paid-out dividend tokens are supplied to each corresponding SCU. The number of tokens counted by each token counter 17a to 17p is supplied to each corresponding SCU. The amounts of money and the number of tokens are converted into optical data which is sent to the MCU 11. This data is inputted into a local computer 27. (Col. 5, lines 48-60). The local computer calculates the various expected values for the game management system. The expected values are constituted of expected individual values for each slot machine and expected total values obtained through the addition of the expected individual values of all the slot machines in the gaming hall. (Col. 5, lines 61-67).

The comparative results of the expected and actual values of the total sales amount, the number of tokens exchanged for premiums, and the quotient are displayed on a CRT 29 at a predetermined time interval, for example, every 30 minutes. (Col. 8, line 66 to col. 9, line 3). A calculated over-pay condition of each slot machine is displayed and monitored on the CRT 29, providing alarm representations in three colors. (Col. 10, lines 20-24).

The Amended Claims Are Not Anticipated Nor Would They Have Been Obvious

Amended claim 1 calls for a warning generating system that is structured to generate a warning signal based on a comparison of the monetary value accepted into a gaming device and the monetary value output from the gaming device for more than one given time period. As such, a gaming device usage can be tracked in a number of different time frames. (Applicant's specification, page 14, lines 4-12; page 18, lines 18-23).

Okada neither discloses nor suggests a warning generator that operates in this manner. Rather, Okada discloses that the tracked results are displayed for only one time interval, that is,

every 30 minutes. (Col. 8, line 66 to col. 9, line 5). Perhaps the time interval is longer or shorter than 30 minutes. However, Okada clearly does not disclose displaying or tracking results for multiple time intervals.

Amended claim 26 calls for a data calculation system configured to generate a payout warning based on the amount of monetary value accepted into a gaming device and the amount of monetary value output from the gaming device wherein jackpot payouts are excluded in the amount of the monetary value output from the gaming device. This, for example, prevents jackpot amounts from skewing averages used to determine whether to indicate that a particular machine is malfunctioning. (Applicant's specification at page 5, lines 16-19; page 13, lines 25-28).

Okada neither discloses nor suggests a data calculation system that operates in this way. Indeed, in Okada, jackpot payouts are always included in the usage calculations.

Amended claim 38 calls for a gaming device that includes a warning calculator coupled to an input counter and an output counter. The warning calculator is structured to generate a payout warning signal based on recorded transactions, and the warning calculator is structured to omit one or more transactions of monetary value generated by the gaming device when determining whether to generate the payout warning signal. Not considering such a transaction will prevent a large payout from skewing, for instance, the average payout amount of the gaming device. (Applicant's specification at page 5, lines 15-16).

There is absolutely no disclosure or suggestion in Okada of omitting one or more transactions of monetary value generated by a gaming device when determining whether to generate a payout warning signal. Rather, in Okada, all amounts outputted by the slot machines are always included in the usage calculations.

Amended claim 46 is similar to amended claim 38, and it is allowable for the same reasons.

Amended claim 51 calls for comparing an amount of monetary value paid by a gaming device to one or more predetermined values. This step includes obtaining an amount of monetary value paid by the gaming device, subtracting an amount of monetary accepted into the gaming device to obtain a difference value, and comparing the difference value to one or more predetermined values. This feature can prevent false or unnecessary warning signals if a gaming device has not only paid out a large amount of money, but a large amount of money has also been wagered at the gaming device. (Applicant's specification at page 5, lines 19-24; page 19, lines 22-29).

Again, Okada fails to teach or suggest this particular feature of Applicant's invention. If the examiner believes that this feature of Applicant's invention would have been obvious, it is respectfully requested that some reference or other evidence be provided that show that such is the case. See MPEP §2144.03.

Conclusion

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that all the claims are now in condition for allowance. Accordingly, allowance of the claims at the earliest possible date is requested.

If prosecution of this application can be assisted by telephone, the Examiner is requested to call Applicant's undersigned attorney at (510) 663-1100.

MAK. 28. 2007 5:06PM

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If any fees are due in connection with the filing of this amendment (including any fees due for an extension of time), such fees may be charged to Deposit Account No. 500388 (Order No. IGT1P315).

Dated: 3/28/07

Respectfully submitted,
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